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2 December 1976

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PFIAB BRIEFING

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DIA And Service Intelligence Services View  
Of Soviet Strategic Objectives

The divergent view of the Defense Intelligence Agency and the service intelligence organizations on Soviet strategic objectives has essentially to do with the subjects

[redacted] indicated at the end of his presentation.

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-- While we generally agree with most of the judgments earlier in the chapter, we disagree with the thrust and many of the specific judgments regarding present objectives for Soviet forces for intercontinental conflict.

Our differences are largely on whether and how the Soviets see their ultimate goals relating to their practical, programmed objectives.

We think the Soviets see their ultimate goals, as expressed in ideology and doctrine, as guides to action. In fact, doctrine and policy -- aimed at achieving the goals -- are created by the party's central committee as a basis for programs.

We see Soviet programs for improving forces for intercontinental conflict, for research on advanced weapons technology, and for civil defense, and the resource

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allocation priorities that support them, as bringing their doctrinal goals of being able to wage, survive, and win an intercontinental nuclear war progressively closer to realization.

We agree that the Soviets probably do not now count on a combination of actions by the USSR and lack of actions by the US which would produce strategic superiority for them in the next ten years.

-- But we believe the facts that the Soviet time frame is probably longer than ten years, and that obviously any US reactions to Soviet programs will alter the pace at which the Soviets move toward their goals, do not negate the fact that achievement of their goals is nevertheless being worked on in a practical manner.

Thus, while we cannot say with confidence when the Soviets expect to gain strategic superiority, we believe they view this objective as practical and attainable in a programmed fashion.

In this connection, we think it is important to make estimates about Soviet goals and planning in the longer time frame, even in an estimate limited to 10 years.

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We think the Soviets see their forces for intercontinental conflict as developing within a unified approach to and strategy for all military forces, which -- along with their political and economic strategy -- is part of an overall approach and strategy aimed at achieving a dominant position in the world.

Finally, we think the Soviets believe that, as they move closer to their goals of strategic superiority over the next ten years, they can increasingly deter US initiatives and inhibit US opposition to Soviet initiatives.

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TALKING PAPER FOR THE DCI

SUBJECTS: Soviet Strategic Objectives  
(NIE 11-3/8-76, NIE 11-4-77);  
The Experiment in Competitive Analysis

INTRODUCTION

-Briefing will cover

--NIE 11-3/8-76, findings on the future strategic environment

--Intelligence Community differences about Soviet strategic objectives expressed in NIE 11-3/8-76 and NIE 11-4-77

--Experiment in competitive analysis.

I. BROAD CONCLUSIONS OF NIE 11-3/8-76

Future Strategic Environment - next 10 years

-Soviet strategic forces will:

continue to increase;  
early 1980s, greatest relative to US;  
mid-1980s, some earlier Soviet gains eroded

-Soviet offensive forces will:

pose increasing threat to US silos;  
unable to prevent launch of US bombers and SLBMs at sea

-Soviet defensive forces to remain penetrable

-Soviet forces able to inflict massive damage on US,  
but not prevent massive damage to USSR

-Important uncertainties

pace and effectiveness of passive defense;  
effectiveness of air defenses

-Cannot assess Soviet future ability to limit human casualties and damage to ~~USSR~~ *Sanctions and facilities the Soviet leaders might consider essential to survival of Soviet Union.*

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Objectives for Strategic Forces

- Main trends, pace of Soviet programs:  
about like last year's NIE, except for civil defense
- Cumulative effect of Soviet programs:  
more intelligence uncertainty and disagreement.
- Findings in main text - DCI Position
  - Persistence and vigor of Soviet programs raise  
question of whether objective is strategic  
superiority?
  - Soviets believe strategic forces contribute to  
ultimate goal of dominance over the West.
  - Objectives for the next 10 years
    - do not count on ability to devastate the  
US while preventing devastation of the  
USSR.
    - striving for warfighting and war survival  
capabilities to leave USSR in a better  
position than US
    - striving for visible and politically useful  
advantages
  - Hope for capabilities giving them more latitude  
to pursue foreign policy.
- Position of intelligence chief , Department of State -  
Soviet objectives and expectations are more modest.
  - No meaningful strategic advantage
  - No war winning or war survival posture
  - Seek improvements to avoid falling behind;  
advantages if possible
  - No gains which will make them more inclined  
to take risks
- DIA, Army, Navy, Air Force, ERDA position: Soviet  
objective is to achieve capabilities to wage and  
survive a nuclear war.

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- Strategic programs in keeping with this objective; integral to ultimate goal of world domination
- Will move closer to ultimate goal in next 10 years
- Increasingly able to deter US initiatives
- Then Air Force intelligence chief
  - Soviets have already placed US at a strategic disadvantage through SALT, detente and their economic and arms control diplomacy
  - NIE underestimates Soviet capabilities, drive for superiority; NIE inadequate to support US policy

## II. OVERALL SOVIET OBJECTIVES - NIE 11-4-77

Addresses broader question of Soviet national goals

### -Considers two related questions

- Soviet policies based on belief they will achieve world dominance? In next 10 years?
- Soviets believe their aggressive actions carry lower risks? Acceptable risks?

### -Areas of Agreement

#### --Soviets believe

- Their system will ultimately prevail
- Military is key instrument of policy
- "Mutual Assured destruction" a present reality, but not permanent.
- Soviets not disposed to foster strategic stability; policies not aimed at equilibrium
- Soviet programs: vigorous and steady pace for two decades
  - Have not faltered after achieving deterrence and parity
  - Expected to continue
  - Reflect concern they may fall behind; reinforces R&D

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--Soviets conscious of weaknesses but believe they have offsetting strengths

-Areas of Disagreement

--Soviet view of Western competitiveness

---Some believe: US and West in long term decline

---Others believe: Soviets hope for this; do not count on it

--First of two lines of analysis: US and allies in irreversable "general crisis of capitalism"

---Soviet problems not debilitating

---Soviets objective is superiority: capabilities to wage, survive and win conventional or nuclear war

---Uncertain when Soviets will achieve superiority, but will move closer in next 10 years, increasingly deter US initiatives.

--Second analysis. Question is much more open.

---Soviets do have increased confidence

---They give greater weight to their problems

---They credit West with resilience

---Soviet objectives and expectations

Keep pace with adversaries.

Seek measure of advantage.

Do not expect war-winning capabilities.

No programatic design for superiority.

Expect tough competition.

-Disagreement among agencies should not obscure important areas of agreement

III. THE EXPERIMENT IN COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

-Agreed with PFIAB to conduct experiment in conjunction with NIE 11-3/8-76

-Teams of experts to address Soviet ICBM accuracy, low altitude air defenses and strategic objectives

-Purpose: To test whether a responsible case would be made that Soviet threat more serious than conveyed in NIE

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- More somber interpretations by "B Team" were expected
  - Members selected whose views coincided with more threatening interpretation
  - B Team reports not part of the NIE
  - B Team reports to be evaluated by PFIAB and NSC staff; no further dissemination
- A Team drafts influenced by B Teams as follows
  - Careful documentation of conclusions
  - Avoided generalizations not founded in analysis
  - More cautious presentation of future Soviet defense capabilities
- B Team on Soviet objectives (led by Dr. Pipes)
  - Concluded: Undeviating, operative Soviet ground strategy of global hegemony
  - Soviets objectives
    - superiority in all military forces
    - war-fighting and war-winning strategic forces
  - Soviets may believe
    - war-fighting and war-winning capabilities are within their grasp
    - war-fighting capabilities would give them more latitude than the US for use of nuclear weapons
    - their capabilities during the next 10 years will support aggressive policies and challenges to US vital interests
- I too am concerned about Soviet military trends
  - I place more stress on Soviet problems, uncertainties, and concerns about US capabilities
  - Wider gap between Soviet expectations and ultimate objectives
- No 180 degree switch in the NIE;
- Past several years NIEs presented an increasingly stark

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picture of Soviet intentions and capabilities

- Based on evidence and analysis of vigor and scope of Soviet programs
- These findings independent of B Team challenges; based on evidence not politically motivated opinions
- Irresponsible publicity will make objective analysis of the experiment difficult
- Press stories publicized what was intended as responsible use of outside sources in a professional experiment
- B Team sweeping critique of NIEs lent itself to leaks
- A and B Team work done seriously and professionally
- Honest differences were expressed
- Integrity of the NIE and the Intelligence Community not compromised

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